



GVROC Council Meeting to consider WALGA State Council Agenda Items

Unconfirmed Minutes

Friday 24 June 2022

CONTENTS

1.	OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.....	4
2.	DECLARATION OF INTEREST.....	4
3.	RECORD OF ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE	4
3.1	Attendance	4
3.2	Apologies.....	4
3.3	Guests	5
3.4	WALGA Representatives	5
3.5	DLGSC Representatives	5
4.	MINUTES OF MEETINGS.....	5
4.1	Minutes of a Meeting of GVROC to consider WALGA State Council Agenda Items held 26 April 2022	5
4.2	Action Sheet Report	5
5.	EMERGING ITEMS	6
6.	Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Matters for Decision	7
6.1	Review of advocacy positions relating to Emergency Management	7
6.2	New Emergency Management Advocacy Position – Community Emergency Service Manager Program.....	9
6.3	Draft WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026 and Updated Advocacy Position	12
7.	Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Matters for Noting/Information.....	15
7.1	2020/21 Local Government Performance Monitoring Project	15
7.2	Proposed Advocacy Position on Arrangements for Management of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades	17
7.3	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 Co-design Process, Phase 1 Submission ...	19
7.4	Western Power Access Arrangement Review Submission.....	21
7.5	Economic Development Research	24
7.6	Development of Child Safe Policy for Local Government	26
7.7	National Reconciliation Week Local Government Activation Program	28
7.8	WA Strategic Trails Blueprint 2022-2027 – Draft for Comment	29
7.9	Issues Paper: Local Government Approaches to Tree Retention.....	30
7.10	Report Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC)	33
7.11	WALGA Best Practice Governance Review Update	34
8.	Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Policy Team Reports	36
8.1	Environment and Waste Policy Team Report	36
8.2	Governance and Organisational Services Policy Team Report.....	36
8.3	Infrastructure Policy Team Report.....	37
8.4	People and Place Policy Team Report.....	38
9.	Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Organisational Key Activity Reports	39
9.1	Report on Key Activities, Commercial and Communications (01-006-03-0017).....	39
9.2	Report on Key Activities, Governance and Organisational Services (01-006-03-0007 TB)	39
9.3	Report on Key Activities, Infrastructure (05-001-02-0003 ID)	39
9.4	Report on Key Activities, Strategy, Policy and Planning (01-006-03-0017 NM)	39
10.	Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Policy Forums and Other Reports	39
10.1	Mining Communities Policy Forum.....	39
10.2	President's Report.....	39
10.3	CEO's Report	40
10.4	Ex Officio Reports.....	40
11.	Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – State Council Status Report	40
11.1	Complete Status Report on State Council Resolutions - To the July 2022 State Council Meeting.....	40
12.	LATE ITEMS as notified, introduced by decision of the Meeting	41
12.1	Proposed Advocacy Position for Management of Bushfire Brigades Discussion Paper	41
12.2	Cashless Debit Card (CDC) – Federal Government Election Result.....	43

13. FUTURE MEETINGS	44
14. CLOSURE OF MEETING	44

GOLDFIELDS VOLUNTARY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS (GVROC)

Videoconference meeting of the GVROC Council to consider WALGA State Council Agenda Items held Friday 24 June 2022 9.00am

AGENDA

1. OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The purpose of the meeting is to provide advice to the WALGA State Council Representative, Cr Laurene Bonza on the Agenda for the WALGA State Council Meetings to be held on 6 July 2022.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Pursuant to the Code of Conduct, Councillors and CEOs must declare to the Chairman any potential conflict of interest they may have in a matter before the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils as soon as they become aware of it. Councillors, CEOs and Deputies may be directly or indirectly associated with some recommendations of the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils. If you are affected by these recommendations, please excuse yourself from the meeting and do not participate in deliberations.

3. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

3.1 Attendance

Cr Mal Cullen (Chair)	President, Shire of Coolgardie
Cr Tracey Rathbone	Councillor, Shire of Coolgardie
Mr James Trail	CEO, Shire of Coolgardie
Cr John Bowler	Mayor, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Mr Andrew Brien	CEO, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder
Cr Ian Mickel	President Shire of Esperance
Mr Shane Burge	CEO, Shire of Esperance
Cr Patrick Hill	President, Shire of Laverton
Mr Jim Epis	CEO, Shire of Leonora
Mr Brian Joiner	CEO, Shire of Menzies
Mr Kevin Hannagan	CEO, Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku (left meeting at 9:30am)
Mr Cary Green	Director Governance & Corporate, Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku
Mr Andrew Mann	Executive Officer, GVROC

3.2 Apologies

Cr Laurene Bonza	President, Shire of Dundas
Mr Peter Fitchat	CEO, Shire of Dundas
Cr Sharon Warner	Councillor, Shire of Dundas
Cr Kim Eckert	Councillor, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder
Cr Ron Chambers	Councillor, Shire of Esperance
Cr Robert Wedge	Councillor, Shire of Laverton
Mr Peter Naylor	CEO, Shire of Laverton
Cr Peter Craig	President, Shire of Leonora
Cr Paul Warner	Councillor, Shire of Menzies
Cr Jill Dwyer	Councillor, Shire of Menzies
Cr Peter Grundy	President, Shire of Wiluna
Cr Timothy Carmody	Councillor, Shire of Wiluna
Mr Gary Gaffney	A/CEO, Shire of Wiluna
Cr Damian McLean	President, Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku

3.3 Guests

Nil

3.4 WALGA Representatives

Vikki Barlow Senior Policy Advisor Community
Craig Hansom LGIS Contract Manager

3.5 DLGSC Representatives

Nil

4. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

4.1 Minutes of a Meeting of GVROC to consider WALGA State Council Agenda Items held 26 April 2022

Minutes of the GVROC Council Meeting to consider WALGA State Council held Tuesday 26 April 2022 are presented for adoption (**Attachment 1**).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Unconfirmed Minutes of the GVROC Council Meeting to consider WALGA State Council held Tuesday 26 April 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie**
 Seconded: Mr Brian Joiner, Shire of Menzies

Carried

4.2 Action Sheet Report

An update on the actions based on the resolutions from the meeting held on 26 April 2022 meeting are presented for noting (**Attachment 2**).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Action Sheet Report as listed for noting be received.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie**
 Seconded: Mr Andrew Brien, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder

Carried

5. EMERGING ITEMS

From: Chair GVROC

Background:

WALGA State Council meets five times each year and as part of the consultation process with Member Councils circulates the State Council Agenda for input through the Zone structure. The Zone can provide comment or submit an alternate recommendation that is then presented to the State Council for consideration.

A full copy of the State Council Agenda for the meeting on 6 July 2022 can be found at **Attachment 3**.

Notification of emerging items must be provided to the Chair no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting.

6. Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Matters for Decision

6.1 Review of advocacy positions relating to Emergency Management

WALGA Recommendation

That State Council:

1. **Endorse the removal of the following Emergency Management Advocacy Positions**
 - 8.1 **Community Resilience**
 - 8.2 **Disaster Mitigation**
 - 8.3 **Emergency Services Levy**
2. **Endorse the following Emergency Management Advocacy Positions:**
 - 8.1 **Emergency Management Principles**
 - 8.2 **State Emergency Management Framework**
 - 8.3 **Sustainable Grant Funding Model for Emergency Management**
 - 8.4 **Consolidated Emergency Services Act**
 - 8.5 **Resource Sharing**
 - 8.6 **Lessons Learnt Management**
 - 8.7 **Emergency Services Levy**
 - 8.8 **Local Government Grants Scheme (LGGS)**

IN BRIEF:

- It is proposed to remove the three existing Emergency Management Advocacy Policy Positions and replace them with a series of more comprehensive policy positions (Appendix 1).
- The new [Advocacy Positions](#) are based on previous State Council endorsed submissions, recommendations from significant reviews and inquiries, and information and priorities captured in sector-wide consultations.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Appendix 1 – Proposed Emergency Management Positions
- Appendix 2 – All State Council resolutions relating to Emergency Management

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Current Emergency Management Policy Positions reviewed:

8.1 Community Resilience

The Association advocates that the Commonwealth Government should commit to continued funding of the Natural Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP) as a fund to assist Local Governments to undertake community resilience building projects to reduce the impacts of identified natural disaster risks on communities.

8.2 Disaster Mitigation

The Association advocates that the Commonwealth and State Governments should commit to specific funding programs to enable Local Governments to undertake essential physical mitigation programs to further reduce the exposure of communities to the impacts of natural disasters and to ensure the protection of essential community infrastructure.

8.3 Emergency Services Levy

The Association advocates for full review of the Emergency Services Levy, its administration, fee structure and distribution mechanism to facilitate funding back to Local Government to support their Emergency Management responsibilities as legislated in the Emergency Management Act 2005.

BACKGROUND:

In 2012, WALGA undertook a comprehensive consultation process with the sector including delivering 11 workshops across WA to identify Local Government priorities in emergency management. More recently, WALGA has conducted sector-wide surveys in 2019 (*Before, During and After*) and 2021 (*Local*

Government Emergency Management Survey) to gather relevant data and to help inform advocacy in emergency management issues.

WALGA has made numerous sector submissions to reviews and inquiries, including more recently:

- Tropical Cyclone Seroja After-Actions Review (2021)
- Independent Review of the 2021 Wooroloo Bushfire (2021)
- Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements (2020)
- ERA Emergency Services Levy Review (2017)
- Special Inquiry into the January 2016 Waroona Fire (the Ferguson Report)
- Perth Hills Bushfire, February 2011 Review (the Keelty Report)

These reviews and inquiries identified opportunities for improvement and WALGA's submissions made recommendations in relation to changes to emergency management processes and systems in preparedness, prevention, response and recovery.

COMMENT:

WALGA Advocacy Positions guide WALGA's policy, advocacy and capacity building activities and support a consistent and whole-of-sector approach. There are currently three State Council endorsed Advocacy Position Statements relating to Emergency Management in the Emergency Management section of the [Manual](#).

The existing Emergency Management Advocacy Policy positions, 8.1 Community Resilience; 8.2 Disaster Mitigation; and 8.3 Emergency Services Levy have not been updated or reviewed since 2016.

The Office of the Auditor General is currently undertaking a performance audit of the administration of funding for volunteer fire and emergency services.

The proposed Emergency Management Advocacy Positions outlined in Appendix 1, are high-level principles derived from previous State Council endorsed submissions, recommendations from significant reviews and inquiries, and information and priorities captured in sector-wide consultations.

Consultation on the proposed Emergency Management Advocacy Positions was undertaken with the People and Place Policy Team on 6 April 2022 which was supportive of the new positions.

Consultation on the proposed advocacy positions was also undertaken with the Local Government Emergency Management Advisory Group on 7 April 2022. The members of this advisory group provided their support with the following changes suggested (now incorporated in Appendix 1):

- 8.3 Include that all funding guidelines should be comprehensive.
- 8.4 Include that Local Government must be involved in the co-design of the *Consolidated Emergency Services Act*.
- 8.8 Add in a comment that funding should support Work Health and Safety obligations.

RECOMMENDATION

GVROC support the WALGA recommendation as presented.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie

Seconded: Mr Andrew Brien, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder

Carried

6.2 New Emergency Management Advocacy Position – Community Emergency Service Manager Program

WALGA Recommendation

That the following WALGA Advocacy Position relating to the Community Emergency Service Manager (CESM) Program be endorsed:

8.9 Expansion of the Community Emergency Services Manager Program

That the Association advocates for an expansion of the Community Emergency Service Manager (CESM) Program, as follows:

- 1. All Local Governments should have the option of participating in the CESM Program.***
- 2. The full cost of the CESM Program should be funded through the Emergency Services Levy.***

IN BRIEF:

- The Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) Program was established to provide Local Governments with additional support to undertake their emergency management functions.
- Following consultation with the sector in 2021, it is proposed to endorse an Advocacy Position for the expansion of the CESM Program.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

In addition to [Agenda item 5.1](#) on the review of WALGA's Emergency Management Advocacy Positions, this new [Advocacy Position](#) provides a specific position on the CESM Program.

BACKGROUND:

The CESM Program was developed by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) to provide Local Governments and Bush Fire Brigade volunteers with an enhanced and comprehensive approach to bush fire risk management.¹

The CESM program was launched in 2003 and expanded in 2007 to encompass an all-hazards approach across prevention, preparedness, response and recovery (PPRR). The CESM Program is designed to bolster Local Government emergency management capacity to deliver services to support community resilience, including bushfire risk management, Local Government Grant Scheme funding applications, management of Bush Fire Brigades (BFBs), and supporting the establishment or review of Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA).

The CESM program is co-funded by DFES and the Local Government, making it particularly valuable to Local Governments without the financial capacity to fully fund an officer to undertake their emergency management functions. It is important to note that funding from DFES or the Emergency Services Levy (ESL) is not provided to Local Governments to fund a similar 'officer' role.

One of the key objectives of the CESM program is to develop a partnership that will see a best practice approach to emergency management delivery between the Local Government sector and DFES.

Key focus areas for CESMs are:

1. Bushfire Risk Management Plan (BRMP) preparation and maintenance;
2. support for the Local Government to comply with their relevant Emergency Management legislative requirements;
3. enhancement of volunteer capability and capacity to maintain competencies and skills in line with brigade/unit profiles;
4. provision of all hazard community engagement programs and initiatives to educate local communities and reduce the likelihood of emergency incidents; and
5. operational response coordination within the Local Government area.

¹ DFES Community Emergency Service Managers Reference Manual, May 2021

WALGA's submission to the 2017 Economic Regulation Authority's review of the ESL, supported the ESL funding the CESM function and strongly supported equitable funding of this position between Local Governments to ensure consistency.

Recommendation 14 of the ERA's final report stated that *"the ESL should be used to fund the full costs of the CESMs in local government. However, it should not be used to fund the broader emergency service and management responsibilities of local government, or the administration costs linked to bush fire brigades and SES units"*.

WALGA partially supported this recommendation, subject to a review of the role, responsibilities and reporting arrangements of the CESM Program. This Advocacy Position has been included in the proposed Advocacy Position on the ESL (listed in Appendix 1 under ESL in [Agenda item 5.1](#))

COMMENT:

WALGA's 2021 Emergency Management Survey results indicated that Local Governments with access to the CESM Program generally felt more confident about their management of BFBs, compared to Local Governments without a CESM.

Of the 111 Local Governments with BFBs, 56 Local Governments have a share of 35 CESM positions with varying cost sharing arrangements between DFES and Local Government under individual MOUs (as at August 2021). DFES employs the Metropolitan CESM's under a Fire Services EBA, while the regional CESM's are employed by Local Governments under an EBA or Local Government Officer Award. Presently only Local Governments with responsibility for managing BFBs have CESMs.

Some examples of the different cost sharing arrangements include the following:

- The Shire of Mundaring (Band 2) has 9 BFBs and a DFES-CESM (not shared with another LG) with 50% paid by DFES and 50% paid by the Shire (covering salary, vehicle and other costs).
- The Shires of Morawa, Murchison, Perenjori, and Yalgoo (all Band 4) have a total of 13 BFBs and a shared CESM with 60% paid by DFES and 10% paid by each Shire.
- The Shires of Moora and Victoria Plains (Band 3 and 4 respectively) have a total of 10 BFBs and a shared CESM with 70% paid by DFES and 15% paid by each Shire.
- The Shires of Collie and West Arthur (Band 3 and 4 respectively) have a total of 9 BFBs and a shared CESM with 60% paid by DFES, 28% paid by the Shire of Collie and 14% paid by the Shire of West Arthur.

Some Local Governments have raised issues with the inconsistent cost and resource sharing arrangements, including the weighting of responsibility of the position to DFES, as well as the different leave and salary allocations depending on who is the employer of the CESM. Some Local Governments fund positions from their own revenue that perform the responsibilities of a CESM but do not receive any monetary support from DFES or the ESL.

In WALGA's 2021 Emergency Management survey, 24 Local Governments expressed an interest in accessing the CESM program. 15 Local Governments were 'unsure' if they wanted access to the CESM program and another 15 Local Governments advised that they didn't want a CESM.

On 18 May 2022, the People and Place Policy Team reviewed this proposed Advocacy Position and resolved to support the new Advocacy Position on the expansion of the CESM Program being included in the July 2022 State Council Agenda, subject to the following amendment:

To remove point 3 of the recommendation:

3. *All CESMs should be employed by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, to enable the provision of consistent employment arrangements to all CESMs.*

GVROC COMMENTS:

A number of concerns were raised during the discussion on the ESL operations and administration as follows:

- Currently DFES determine the rates of ESL for LGAs and also the distribution of the ESL. It is believed this is not best practice and it would be better to separate the operations and administration of the ESL, with a suggestion that the Department of Finance could set the rates, and DFES determine the distribution of the ESL and manage its operations.

- Need to also consider the impact of ESL on small regional LGAs and how they are best placed to collect and manage this process given limited capacity.

RECOMMENDATION

GVROC support the WALGA Advocacy Position relating to the Community Emergency Service Manager (CESM) Program as presented, noting the comments provided above.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: *Mr Shane Burge, Shire of Esperance***
 Seconded: *Mr Andrew Brien, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder*

Carried

6.3 Draft WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026 and Updated Advocacy Position

WALGA Recommendation

That:

1. the draft *WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026* be endorsed.
2. WALGA's existing Advocacy Position on Public Libraries be deleted and replaced as follows:

3.8 Public Libraries

1. *Western Australian Local Government public libraries provide valuable local cultural infrastructure, creating social and community hubs for community capacity building, recreation, education and literacy, digital inclusion, and social connection, cohesion and inclusion.*
2. *WALGA supports the provision of Public Library services in Western Australia through a formal partnership between Local Government and the State Government of Western Australia, governed by the Library Board Act 1951, namely the State and Local Government Agreement for the Provision of Public Library Services in Western Australia (2020).*
3. *The WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026 provides a framework for a shared vision, strategic direction and collaborative action in the provision of a vibrant and sustainable 21st century public library network.*
4. *It is essential that a sustainable funding model enables Local Governments to continue to deliver library services to support continued growth and adaptation to changing community needs.*

IN BRIEF:

- The Public Libraries Working Group (PLWG) has been overseeing the development of a new WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026 (Strategy) with a focus on strengthening communities, digital inclusion and the value placed on public libraries.
- Consultation was undertaken between February 2021 and April 2022 through workshops with public library professionals; stakeholder interviews with a targeted selection of metropolitan, regional and remote Local Government public libraries; and public consultation via an online survey.
- The new Strategy will support the work of 232 public libraries operated by Local Government around Western Australia.
- Endorsement of the Strategy is being sought from WALGA State Council and the Library Board of Western Australia, prior to submission to the Minister for Culture and the Arts for final approval.
- An updated advocacy position is proposed to reflect current governance arrangements, the outcomes being sought under the new Strategy and the achievement of elements of the existing position under the *2016-2021 WA Public Libraries Strategy*.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Draft WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

WALGA's existing advocacy position:

3.8 Public Libraries

WALGA supports:

1. *the provision of Public Library services in Western Australia through a formal partnership between Local Government and the State Government of Western Australia governed by the Library Board Act 1951;*
2. *the tiered model of library service delivery; and*
3. *the transfer of ownership of stock from State to Tier 1 Local Governments.*

(May 2019 – 46.4/2019)

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS:

WALGA contributed \$16,755 to the consultant's fees to undertake the community consultation, and prepare and draft the Strategy and a proposed Implementation Plan and Evaluation Framework.

BACKGROUND:

WALGA is a party to the *State and Local Government Agreement for the Provision of Public Library Services in Western Australia (2020)* (the Agreement) as well as Chair of the PLWG which is established to oversee the implementation of the Agreement. Other members of the PLWG are:

- State Library of WA;
- Library Board of WA;
- Public Libraries WA;
- a representative from a Tier 2 regional public library;
- LG Professionals WA;
- Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC);
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development; and
- Office of Digital Government.

PLWG identified that the 2017 *WA Public Libraries Strategy* was outdated and engaged a consultant to develop a new strategy in December 2021. The Strategy has been developed, guided by a Working Group involving representatives from WALGA, DLGSC, PLWA, LG Professionals WA and the State Library.

Consultation was undertaken with Local Governments and the public libraries sector during 2021, and further targeted community consultation on the draft Strategy was undertaken through a selection of metropolitan, regional and remote Local Government public libraries, as well as broad community consultation via a survey, from February to April 2022.

The Strategy outlines a set of principles to support implementation, with a focus on delivering the best outcomes for Western Australians and ensuring that PLWG members are committed to working in partnership to deliver these outcomes.

The Strategy is guided by the following principles:

- Community comes first;
- We are stronger and smarter when we work together;
- We are accountable; and
- We are committed to success.

The Strategy outcomes are outlined under three key pillars, being:

- Libraries Strengthening Community;
- Digitally Inclusive Libraries; and
- Public Libraries Valued as an Essential Community Asset.

COMMENT:

WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026

Through public libraries, Local Governments provide important, local level social and cultural infrastructure. Supported through a partnership between State and Local Government, public libraries play an essential role in community capacity building and connection, literacy and skills development, social inclusion, facilitating digital inclusion, and supporting access to technology.

The new Strategy acknowledges the need to ensure that public libraries accurately assess and evaluate the impact of the services they provide to their communities. This is critical to demonstrating the value of libraries to stakeholders and communities and will assist in ensuring sustainable funding for libraries to continue to grow and respond to the changing needs of their communities.

In 2021 there were more than 7 million in-person visits and 3 million online visits to public libraries. Western Australians borrowed more than 16 million books, electronic books, audiobooks, magazines, DVDs and other items to keep themselves educated, informed and entertained.

Recently the important role of public libraries in supporting digital inclusion and the health and wellbeing of local communities was recognized when the State Government provided a grant of \$375,000 to support public libraries to assist community members to setup the ServiceWA app. This funding

provided extra staffing, translation services, outreach initiatives and other resources to assist the community to use and understand the app.

An implementation plan is being developed to outline the actions required to achieve the outcomes described in the Strategy and assign responsibility and timelines to these actions, as well as an evaluation framework to measure the success of these actions.

Updated Advocacy Position

It is appropriate that the existing advocacy position be updated to reflect current governance arrangements and the outcomes being sought under the *Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026*. In addition, Items 2 and 3 of WALGA's existing Public Libraries Advocacy Position have been achieved under the *2016-2021 WA Public Libraries Strategy*.

An updated Advocacy Position is therefore proposed.

3.8 Public Libraries

1. *Western Australian Local Government public libraries provide valuable local cultural infrastructure, creating social and community hubs for community capacity building, recreation, education and literacy, digital inclusion, and social connection, cohesion and inclusion.*
2. *WALGA supports the provision of Public Library services in Western Australia through a formal partnership between Local Government and the State Government of Western Australia, governed by the Library Board Act 1951, namely the State and Local Government Agreement for the Provision of Public Library Services in Western Australia (2020).*
3. *The WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026 provides a framework for a shared vision, strategic direction and collaborative action in the provision of a vibrant and sustainable 21st century public library network.*
4. *It is essential that a sustainable funding model enables Local Governments to continue to deliver library services to support continued growth and adaptation to changing community needs.*

RECOMMENDATION

GVROC support the WALGA recommendation as presented.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Ian Mickel, Shire of Esperance**
 Seconded: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie

Carried

7. Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Matters for Noting/Information

7.1 2020/21 Local Government Performance Monitoring Project

WALGA Recommendation

That the results of the 2020/21 Local Government Performance Monitoring Project and publication of the Performance Monitoring Dashboard be noted.

IN BRIEF:

- The 2022 Local Government Performance Monitoring Project (Project) and associated Local Government Performance Monitoring Report shows that Local Governments have maintained high performance in undertaking their planning and building functions during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- WALGA has undertaken the Project annually since 2018 with data provided by participating Local Governments. The Project has continued to expand with 30 Local Governments participating this year in 2022.
- This year the written Report has been replaced with an [online interactive dashboard](#) accessible on the WALGA website.
- The new format provides several benefits for participating Local Governments, reduces overall project cost and reporting times for WALGA, and will allow the project to grow at an accelerated rate in future years.

ATTACHMENT:

- [2022 Key Indicator Snapshot](#)
- [Performance Monitoring Dashboard](#)

BACKGROUND:

The WALGA Local Government Performance Monitoring Project and associated Performance Monitoring Report originated in response to the inaccurate and unfair portrayal of Local Governments' planning performance in the Property Council's 2016 Benchmarking Greater Perth Local Governments report. The Project is undertaken annually and has continued to expand from 11 Local Governments in 2018 to 30 this year.

COMMENT:

Local Governments participating in the 2022 Project were: the Cities of Armadale, Bayswater, Belmont, Bunbury, Busselton, Canning, Cockburn, Fremantle, Gosnells, Greater Geraldton, Joondalup, Kalamunda, Karratha, Kwinana, Mandurah, Melville, Rockingham, South Perth, Stirling, Subiaco, Swan, Vincent, Wanneroo; the Towns of Bassendean, Port Hedland and Victoria Park; and, the Shires of Augusta-Margaret River, Broome, Mundaring and Nannup.

These Local Governments represent 79% of Western Australia's total population and between 2009 and 2019 accounted for 86% of the state's population growth. They provide a strong indicator of how the Local Government sector in Western Australia is performing in the areas of strategic and statutory planning and building regulation.

Key findings for 2022:

- Local Governments determined 73,484 applications (development applications, subdivision referrals and building permits), a 40% increase on the previous year,
- 90% of all applications were determined or responded to within statutory timeframes,
- 99% of all development applications were approved,
- 98% of all development applications were determined under delegated authority
- 12 Local Governments have a current Local Planning Strategy (LPS), 14 Local Governments are currently reviewing their LPS, and four Local Governments neither have a current LPS nor are they developing or reviewing their strategy,
- Local Governments continue to have concerns with the length of time to receive consent to advertise and final endorsement for LPS,

- 45% of Local Governments have reviewed, consolidated or undertaken an audit of their Local Planning Scheme within the past five years. 58% of Local Governments are in the process of reviewing their scheme,
- For scheme amendments, on average:
 - Local Governments finalised 2.4 scheme amendments in 2020-21, with each taking an average of 18 months to complete,
 - 44% of the time taken to complete scheme amendments could be attributed to State Government processes. This compares to 47% average over the 5 years of reporting.

WALGA has undertaken a range of process improvements to contemporise how this year's Project is reported. The annual written report has been replaced by an online interactive dashboard which provides access to all five years of Project reporting and allows Local Governments to analyse and compare performance by year, region or against individual Local Governments. Moving to a dashboard format has reduced project costs and reporting times and will allow for faster expansion of the project in future years.

The dashboard provides a collated view of the 30 Local Governments that participate. The relatively low variance collectively and within most of the individual performance indicators suggests that the performance may be reflective of the Local Government sector as a whole, although there are exceptions.

Importantly, while the dashboard is not intended to be a comparison of individual Local Government performance it does allow individual Local Governments to draw comparisons themselves and other Local Governments, which may be useful for those who may have similar development pressures and resourcing.

WALGA has, and will continue to, encourage relevant State Government agencies to consider and use this performance information in any legislation, policy or regulations prepared by the State which affects Local Government.

WALGA is promoting this project to the sector with a view to continue to increase member participation in the 2021-22 financial year reporting period.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC note the WALGA results of the 2020/21 Local Government Performance Monitoring Project and publication of the Performance Monitoring Dashboard.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie**
 Seconded: Mr Jim Epis, Shire of Leonora

Carried

7.2 Proposed Advocacy Position on Arrangements for Management of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades

(also refer to Agenda Item 12.1)

WALGA Recommendation

That the Proposed Advocacy Position Paper regarding the arrangements for the management of Bush Fire Brigades be noted.

IN BRIEF:

- The Association has prepared a Proposed Advocacy Position on the arrangements for management of Bush Fire Brigades Paper to guide sector consultation on this matter.
- The Paper was circulated to all CEOs on 24 May 2022 seeking feedback, preferably endorsed by Councils, by 8 July 2022 to inform the preparation of a proposed Advocacy Position for consideration by State Council at their September 2022 meeting.
- Adoption of an Advocacy Position on the arrangements for management of Bush Fire Brigades is timely as the State Government is currently preparing the *Consolidated Emergency Services Act*, which is expected to be released for consultation in early 2023.

ATTACHMENT:

- [Arrangements for Management of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades: Proposed Advocacy Position](#)
- Also refer to additional **Late Item 12.1** on this agenda regarding Proposed Advocacy Position for Management of Bushfire Brigades Discussion Paper

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

WALGA does not currently have an [Advocacy Position](#) on the arrangements for management of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades.

WALGA has prepared eight updated Advocacy Position Statements relating to Emergency Management, which will be considered at the July State Council meeting ([Agenda Item 5.1](#)). An Advocacy Position on the expansion of the Community Emergency Services Manager Program is also submitted for decision ([Agenda Item 5.2](#)).

BACKGROUND:

Rural fire management has been the subject of recommendations following a number of reviews over the last 10 years. The [Ferguson Report](#) on the 2016 Waroona Bushfire recommended that the State Government establish a rural fire service to address issues in rural fire management, including insufficient capacity and unsuitable governance to deliver rural fire services. The 2017 [Economic Regulation Authority Review of the Emergency Services Levy \(ESL\)](#) considered the extent to which the ESL should be available to fund the administrative and/ or operational costs of a rural fire service, although it was outside the terms of reference for the ERA to examine the merits of a rural fire service or form a view on the best model of a rural fire service². A number of Local Governments provided submissions to the ERA Review in support of a rural fire service³.

COMMENT:

The Proposed Advocacy Position Paper has been developed to obtain feedback from the sector to assist the Association to prepare an Advocacy Position on the management of Bush Fire Brigades. The Paper outlines the rationale for the following proposed new Advocacy Position:

Management of Bush Fire Brigades

1. *The Association advocates that the State Government must provide for:*
 - a) *A clear pathway for Local Governments to transfer responsibility for the management of Bush Fire Brigades to the State Government when ongoing management is beyond the capacity, capability and resources of the Local Government;*
 - b) *The co-design of a suite of relevant guidelines and materials to assist those Local Governments that manage Bush Fire Brigades;*

² [ERA Review of the ESL, 2017, pg 185](#)

³ [ERA ESL Review – summary of submissions to issues paper and draft report](#)

- c) *Mandatory and minimum training requirements for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers supported by a universally accessible training program managed by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES); and*
 - d) *The recognition of prior learning, experience and competency of Bush Fire Brigade volunteers.*
2. *That a Working Group comprising representatives of WALGA and DFES be established to develop a process and timeline for the transfer of responsibility for Bush Fire Brigades in accordance with 1(a).*
3. *Where management of Bush Fire Brigades is transferred to DFES in accordance with 1(a), DFES should be resourced to undertake the additional responsibility.*

Responses to WALGA's 2021 Local Government Emergency Management Survey indicated that there are a number of concerns within the sector with respect to the current arrangements for management of BFBs. 53% of respondents from Local Governments that manage BFBs expressed that they did not think it was appropriate that Local Government should manage BFBs, while 33% indicated that they did think it was appropriate that Local Governments should manage BFBs but some changes were required to the arrangements. WALGA's 2021 Local Government Emergency Management Survey provided some initial data about the sector's views on this issue and indicated that further consideration of the issue was required. This consultation will enable that data to be interrogated more deeply, and encourages a discussion between BFBs, administration and Elected Members on the matter through the request for Council endorsed responses.

A hybrid model is proposed in order to be responsive to the varying contexts, conditions and communities in Local Governments across the State. Just as every regional community is different and has its own culture, a one size fits all approach to BFB management may not be appropriate:

Across Western Australia 111 Local Governments manage 563 BFBs involving approximately 20,000 volunteers. Local Governments manage anywhere between one and 20 BFBs. Some Local Governments have the support of a Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) to assist in BFB management. Western Australian Local Governments vary greatly in:

- size, ranging from less than 1.5 to over 370,000 square kilometres;
- population, just over 100 to more than 220,000 people;
- the number of staff employed, from less than 10 to over 1000; and
- revenue received, which in 2019-20 ranged from just over \$2 million to just over \$225 million.

The endorsement of a new Advocacy Position on this issue will guide the Association in its discussions with the State Government as it progresses the consolidation of the *Fire Brigades Act 1942*, *Bush Fires Act 1954* and *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998* into the *Consolidated Emergency Services Act*.

The Paper was sent to all CEOs on 24 May 2022 for a response by 8 July 2022. Local Governments are encouraged to engage with their volunteers and communities on the matter and pass a resolution through their Council.

A report on the feedback received and a final Proposed Advocacy Position will be prepared for consideration at the 9 September 2022 State Council meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC note the WALGA proposed Advocacy Position Paper regarding the arrangements for the management of Bush Fire Brigades.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Ian Mickel, Shire of Esperance

Seconded: Mr Andrew Brien, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder

Carried

7.3 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 Co-design Process, Phase 1 Submission

WALGA Recommendation

That the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* Co-design Process, Phase 1 Submission endorsed via Flying Minute on 26 May 2022 be noted.

IN BRIEF:

- The *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* (ACH Act) passed the Parliament in December 2021 and is expected to commence in 2023.
- The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) recently undertook Phase 1 of the co-design process for the regulations, statutory guidelines and operational policies that will support the ACH Act.
- WALGA's submission made 25 recommendations, particularly relating to the proposed activity categories, the need for ongoing sector consultation, and the need to balance the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage against the requirements for Local Governments to undertake necessary infrastructure and maintenance works in the interests of local communities.
- WALGA's submission was circulated to State Council via Flying Minute process and was endorsed on 26 May 2022.
- Minor amendments were made to the submission as a result of comments received through the Flying Minute process and the submission was provided to DPLH on 27 May 2022.

ATTACHMENT:

- [WALGA submission: Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021, May 2022](#)
- [Flying Minute – WALGA submission: Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

This submission aligns with WALGA's existing [Advocacy Positions](#) and previous submissions:

3.1.3 *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 and South West Native Title Settlement*

The Association acknowledges Noongar people as the traditional owners of the South West Region. Local Government is supportive of conserving and protecting the State's Aboriginal heritage.

(July 2019 – 68.5/2019)

3.1.2 *Reconciliation*

The Association supports the efforts of the Local Government sector to recognise and respect Aboriginal cultural practices and places of meaning, through the development of Reconciliation Action Plans.

(September 2012 – 118.5/2012)

It should be noted that an updated WALGA Advocacy Position on Aboriginal cultural heritage is under development.

Previous WALGA submissions:

- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 - 2018 Review Submission* endorsed by State Council in July 2018;
- AHA Review Consultation Phase Two, submission endorsed by State Council in July 2019;
- WALGA's 2020 response to survey during Phase 3 consultation based on previous submissions and member feedback (including the Aboriginal Heritage Reference Group);
- WALGA and DPLH co-facilitated ten place-based online workshops which considered activities regularly undertaken by Local Government (included at Appendix 2 of the Submission).

BACKGROUND:

The *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* (ACH Act) passed the Parliament in December 2021 and is expected to commence in 2023. The legislation replaces the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*, providing a contemporary framework for the recognition, protection, conservation and preservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

DPLH is currently developing the regulations, statutory guidelines and operational policies that will support the ACH Act. Phase 1 of DPLH's co-design process involved a short, five-week consultation period beginning on 26 April 2022 guided by a series of Factsheets. It is understood that these materials will be further consulted on during two subsequent consultation phases later in 2022.

COMMENT:

WALGA and other stakeholders sought an extension to the 27 May 2022 closing date for submissions but this was not agreed by DPLH.

WALGA's submission was informed by previous WALGA submissions on Aboriginal cultural heritage, the views of WALGA's Aboriginal Heritage Reference Group, and written feedback from some Local Governments. The short time frame provided did not allow for thorough consultation with Local Governments. However WALGA arranged for DPLH to deliver two co-design workshops specifically for Local Governments on 20 and 23 May 2022, attended by 29 Local Governments.

Some feedback was received from State Council via the Flying Minute process, in particular requesting that the submission take a stronger stance on the activity categories in relation to activities on already disturbed and developed land, and for ongoing infrastructure maintenance activities. Minor amendments were made to the submission to address these concerns.

WALGA's submission includes 25 recommendations, primarily relating to:

- The importance of the Activity Table being clearly described and defined to prevent confusion;
- Categorisation of activities being based on underlying condition of the land (previously disturbed land/ uncleared land etc);
- Requirements for the categorisation of particular activities conducted by Local Government and/or private landholders as exempt (for example, emergency works, compliance with s.33 Notices under the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, ongoing maintenance and upgrades of existing infrastructure);
- Concerns around the application of the legislation to residential, freehold properties larger than 1100 square metres in cities and towns;
- Need for processes to be scalable depending on size of area, type of activity and resources of proponents;
- Need for 12 weeks consultation during the next co-design phase; and
- Requirements for ongoing and sufficient funding to support the the efficient establishment and functioning of the new Aboriginal heritage system, in particular with respect to the ACH Council, Local Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Services (LACHS) and Local Governments.

In 2021 WALGA and DPLH co-facilitated ten place based online workshops to identify activities regularly undertaken by Local Government, which 43 Local Governments participated in. At the conclusion of the consultation process WALGA submitted to DPLH a Draft Composite Local Government Activity List, Consultation Report, and Draft Activity Lists provided by the City of Kalamunda, Town of Port Hedland and Shire of Augusta-Margaret River. These documents have been resubmitted as Annexure 2 of the Submission.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC note the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* Co-design Process, Phase 1 Submission endorsed via WALGA Flying Minute on 26 May 2022.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie**
 Seconded: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton

Carried

And GVROC request WALGA State Council note the potential that if this process is not managed properly that LGAs will be burdened with activity notices and request that adequate locks and funding are in place to address this concern.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Mr Shane Burge, Shire of Esperance**
 Seconded: Mr Jim Epis, Shire of Leonora

Carried

7.4 Western Power Access Arrangement Review Submission

WALGA Recommendation

That the submission to the Economic Regulation Authority concerning the proposed Western Power Access Arrangement 2022-23 – 2026/27 endorsed via Flying Minute on 20 April 2022 be noted.

IN BRIEF:

- The Economic Regulation Authority invited submissions from stakeholders concerning the Access Arrangement proposed by Western Power, that will govern services offered, prices charged, capital and operating expenditure over the five years from 2022/23 – 2026/27.
- The ERA has published a Discussion Paper and held a stakeholder briefing. In addition, Local Government representatives attended a briefing from Western Power.
- A submission has been prepared that identifies matters that require further review and investigation by the ERA particularly relating to streetlighting, safety (pole top fires), network reliability performance measurement and pricing for infrastructure related services.
- Strong support for the proposed network initiated underground power program is offered. Underground power has been demonstrated to offer significant benefits and delivering this in a way that avoids Western Power incurring significant renewal costs to old overhead infrastructure enables residents to face lower costs.
- State Council endorsed the submission by Flying Minute on 20 April 2022.
- The submission was provided to the Economic Regulation Authority on 20 April 2022.

ATTACHMENTS:

- [Western Power's Fifth Access Arrangement Review: Submission to the Economic Regulation Authority](#)
- [Flying Minute – Western Power Access Arrangement Review Submission](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

This submission is aligned with the endorsed [Advocacy Positions](#):

5.5 Street Lighting December 2017 – 126.6/2017

5.7 Underground Power December 2020 – 145.6/2020

BACKGROUND:

Western Power operates a regulated electricity network. An access arrangement approved by the Economic Regulation Authority (ERA) sets out the services, terms and conditions, including prices, for Western Power's customers. Local Governments are not direct customers for most services but engage with Western Power in ways that are unique to the sector including streetlighting, underground power and relocation of infrastructure. The approved prices Western Power charges for operation and maintenance of streetlights comprises the majority of the Synergy tariff set by the State Government.

The next Access Arrangement will cover the period 2022/23 to 2026/27. The ERA's review is intended to ensure that Western Power invests in and operates the network as efficiently as possible for the long-term benefit of electricity consumers. Western Power must also maintain security, reliability and safety and take account of the environmental consequences of energy supply and consumption.

COMMENT:

The Access Arrangement proposed by Western Power primarily focuses on responding to State Government policy in relation to sustainable energy. The key matters addressed in the WALGA submission to the ERA are:

1. Streetlighting

The submission seeks further consideration by the ERA of the proposed change to the Reference Service definition, to require that streetlights are maintained to the design standard that existed at the time of their installation rather than the current lighting standards. The current Access Arrangement requires streetlighting to be maintained to current lighting standards. While fixed pole spacing means that it is not feasible to meet current standards in all circumstances, reference to standards existing at some unknown time in the past does not provide a sound basis for Local Governments to work with Western Power to address inadequate lighting and spill lighting, which both lead to complaints from residents.

The Access Arrangement proposed by Western Power introduces a strategy to use LED replacement globes in existing luminaires that would currently use mercury vapour, CFL, metal halide or high-pressure sodium lamps. There has been no consultation with Local Governments or information provided concerning the quality of lighting and lifecycle costs that will be achieved using this approach. The proposed Access Arrangement does not list proposed pricing for streetlights with this combination of technologies. Consequently, it is critical that much more information is provided to the ERA and that it is demonstrated that this approach is both cost effective and deliver a level of lighting that is acceptable to Local Governments.

2. Underground Power

The Access Arrangement proposes that \$440 million, net of capital contribution of \$241.9 million (that will be raised from residents through their Local Government or from the State Government), will be spent over five years to underground 875 kilometres of existing overhead electricity distribution lines. This will underground sections of the network where it is cost comparative relative to upgrading the overhead distribution network. This represents a marked acceleration in the program of underground projects relative to the past five years.

The Local Government submission supports prioritising placing electricity distribution infrastructure underground rather than upgrading poles and overhead wires when significant renewal work is required. Where undergrounding can be achieved cost effectively it represents a once in an asset life opportunity to markedly improve the streetscape and capture a wide range of benefits. The submission supports the ERA valuing forward looking benefits from undergrounding distribution infrastructure, such as the ability to accommodate more roof top solar power and electric vehicle charging.

3. Safety

Silicone treatments are currently used to reduce the incidents of pole top fires. In the draft Access Arrangement, Western Power proposes to reduce the volume of silicone treatments and incur increased costs in total, due to a change in policy or regulation that requires these treatments be applied only to de-energised lines. Local Governments in peri-urban and regional areas have raised concerns about an increase in pole-top fires. The submission requests that the ERA seek from Western Power alternative approaches to efficiently mitigate the risk of pole top fires, rather than accept the increased risk.

4. Customer Communication

The submission acknowledges that social media and websites have an increasing role in communication with customers. The Local Government submission highlights that telecommunications infrastructure is critically dependent on power supplies, so Western Power cannot rely on customers having access to internet-based communications during periods of power outages and some capacity for traditional communication arrangements must be maintained.

5. Network Reliability

The Local Government submission highlights that the network wide reliability performance measures do not highlight or provide incentives for Western Power to address the much poorer performance that occurs in parts of the network. It is recommended that focused performance measures be investigated. It is also identified that the blanket exclusion of periods of Total Fire Ban from the performance measures provides no incentive for Western Power to develop safe ways of working under exemptions that are available, and so potentially better meet customer expectations under these circumstances.

6. Infrastructure Related Services

The submission calls on the ERA to review and if necessary, set efficient prices for defined Western Power services such as connection / disconnection and relocation of poles, stays or domes.

The Infrastructure Policy Team endorsed the submission on 14 April 2022. State Council endorsed the submission by Flying Minute on 20 April 2022. The submission was submitted to the Economic Regulation Authority on 20 April 2022.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC note the WALGA submission to the Economic Regulation Authority concerning the proposed Western Power Access Arrangement 2022-23 – 2026/27 endorsed via Flying Minute on 20 April 2022.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie

Seconded: Mr Jim Epis, Shire of Leonora

Carried

7.5 Economic Development Research

WALGA Recommendation

That the research into the Local Government sector's economic development priorities and activities be noted.

IN BRIEF:

- With COVID-19 having a significant impact on economic and business activity, WALGA is seeking to gain a renewed understanding of the sector's economic development priorities and activities.
- WALGA has commenced a research project to gather insights into the current economic development landscape and to identify the key issues for local economies for use in policy discussions with the State and Federal Government.
- The findings of the research will be brought to the State Council Economic Development Policy Forum in the second half of 2022 and will be used to shape WALGA's support to the sector on economic issues.

BACKGROUND:

WALGA undertook a major piece of work in 2019 to support Local Governments to better understand the role they can play in driving local economic development, and to understand barriers and challenges to Local Government's economic development activities and to put forward solutions.

After a significant period of research and consultation with Local Governments, State Government and other important stakeholders including business groups and universities, the outcome of this project was a series of documents for Local Government aimed at supporting their economic development roles and responsibilities including [an economic development framework and policy agenda](#). Positive feedback has been received that these have been useful tools for Local Governments in looking to establish or refresh their economic development strategies.

Since then, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on local economies, and many Local Governments have focused their economic development activities on the provision of support to assist local businesses to navigate the pandemic and the imposition of restrictions. The pandemic has also seen a number of shifts that may have longer term implications for local economies and Local Government's economic development activities, including the greater use of technology and work from home arrangements.

In light of these developments, WALGA is refreshing its' knowledge base on the local economic development landscape and priorities to ensure the Association has a contemporary understanding of the issues facing the sector with respect to economic development. As part of this work a consultant has been engaged to:

- Undertake desktop research on the current economic development landscape and key economic development information for individual Local Governments;
- Conduct focus groups sessions with Local Governments to explore key economic development topics, issues and challenges identified through desktop research;
- Provide a report outlining:
 - Common areas of focus for the sector (economic development priorities);
 - Opportunities for collaboration across the sector and with other levels of Government, including alignment with Diversify WA;
 - Barriers and challenges faced by Local Governments when undertaking economic development activities; and
 - Proposed policy solutions, including consideration of best practise in other jurisdictions in Australia and around the world.

The findings of the research will be considered by the State Council Economic Development Policy Forum in the second half of 2022.

It is intended that the research will be used to update the policy agenda developed in 2018 which aims to support Local Governments' economic development activities and underpin advocacy to the State and Federal Governments, as well as to WALGA's support to the sector on economic issues.

COMMENT:

WALGA continues to receive feedback that economic development is a focus area for Local Governments. A survey of members was undertaken in November 2021 to inform the future work program and direction for the team. Almost 60 Local Governments from across the state responded to the Survey, with priorities being:

- Access to data and statistics;
- Advocacy; and
- Economic development case studies.

This research project will provide up to date information necessary to allow WALGA to deliver on these services and to meet Members' needs.

GVROC COMMENTS:

GVROC consider this research to be a significant matter, which has had little detail or information provided since it first started being looked at in 2018. The GVROC request more details and information to be provided on the work and input that has been undertaken since 2018 and information on who the consultant is and timelines for the work proposed going forward.

The GVROC would also like to request that representatives from WALGA involved in this project and consultancy come to our next meeting on 29th July 2022 to present on it the research project and activities proposed to be undertaken.

RECOMMENDATION:

The GVROC note the WALGA research into the Local Government sector's economic development priorities and activities and request WALGA respond to the GVROC comments as listed above.

1.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: *Mr James Trail, Shire of Coolgardie*

Seconded: *Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton*

Carried

7.6 Development of Child Safe Policy for Local Government

WALGA Recommendation

That the update on the development of the Child Safe Policy for Local Government be noted.

IN BRIEF:

- The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommended that Local Governments should designate child safety officer positions from existing staff profiles with support from governments at the national, state and territory levels.
- The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) and the Department of Communities (DoC) are developing a Child Safe Policy for Local Government.
- The development of the policy builds upon the Child Safety Officers Consultation undertaken during 2021.
- A series of co-design workshops will be held with Local Government sector representatives during June 2022. Sector wide consultation is planned for July 2022.
- It is anticipated that the draft policy will be presented to WALGA State Council for endorsement in December 2022, prior to consideration for Ministerial endorsement.

ATTACHMENTS:

- [Implementation of Child Safety Officers in Local Governments: Summary of Findings](#)
- [Discussion Paper on Implementation of Child Safety Officers in Local Governments: WALGA Submission](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

3.6 Children and Young People

The Local Government sector supports the development and well-being of children and young people through strategic partnerships and a combination of services and facility provision. The Association advocates that the State and Commonwealth should continue to invest in the wellbeing of young West Australians.

December 2018 – 14.1.7/2018

3.10.2 National Redress

WALGA supports Local Government participation in the State's National Redress Scheme, with full financial coverage by the State

March 2020 – 14.1/2020

BACKGROUND:

Recommendation 6.12 of the [Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse](#) (the Royal Commission) recommended that, with support from governments at the national, state and territory levels, Local Governments should designate child safety officer positions from existing staff profiles to carry out the following functions:

1. developing child safe messages in local government venues, grounds and facilities;
2. assisting local institutions to access online child safe resources;
3. providing child safety information and support to local institutions on a needs basis; and
4. supporting local institutions to work collaboratively with key services to ensure child safe approaches are culturally safe, disability aware and appropriate for children from diverse backgrounds.

A Discussion Paper on the implementation of child safety officers in Local Governments was developed by DoC in 2020 to guide sector consultation. The consultation occurred between December 2020 and April 2021, with 55 Local Governments providing input to the WALGA submission which was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute in March 2021.

The WALGA submission made a number of recommendations including:

- child safety should be embedded across Local Government functions and business areas, rather than as a stand-alone person or position;

- a clear framework needs to be developed outlining the scope of the child safety function, including minimum requirements and reporting requirements;
- the State Government should provide capacity building support to Local Government through the provision of resources including template policies, procedures and guidelines, and ongoing training and skills development;
- the State's independent oversight body needs to be resourced to provide expert officers in each region to provide support and guidance to Local Governments;
- State or Commonwealth funding will be required for the delivery of the child safety function in smaller, less well-resourced Local Governments; and
- State Government and Local Government form a working group to guide further consultation and policy development.

DoC released a summary of the consultation findings in April 2022. The findings report recognised the feedback from the sector including the value of embedding child safety across all Local Government frameworks. It also highlighted the need for further engagement with the Local Government sector to strengthen the approach to child safety, including supporting understanding of child safeguarding, clarifying the child safety function and identifying dedicated training and resources.

COMMENT:

DoC and DLGSC are looking to build on the previous consultation and are currently developing a policy to support Local Governments to implement the child safety functions into existing roles. It is anticipated this will be in the form of a policy template that sets out Local Government responsibilities to support child safe communities but enables flexibility to adapt or embed the policy in each unique Local Government.

Policy development will commence in June 2022 via a co-design process with a representative group of Local Governments. Local Government representatives from WALGA's Community Industry Reference Group, the Child Safety Community of Practice and those involved in previous consultation are invited to participate. Other invited stakeholders include LG Professionals WA, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Youth Advisory Council of WA, People with Disability WA and Aboriginal Health Council.

Alongside this process, WALGA is continuing to advocate to the State Government for:

- a clear framework for implementation, with a clear delineation of State and Local Government responsibilities for child safety;
- capacity building support and resources for Local Governments to support ongoing implementation;
- the State's independent oversight body to be resourced to provide expert officers in each region to provide support and guidance to Local Governments; and
- funding to support Local Government delivery, particularly for Band 3 and 4 Local Governments.

It is anticipated that a draft policy template will be released for sector wide consultation in July 2022. WALGA will provide the final draft template (informed by sector feedback) to State Council for decision at the December 2022 meeting.

The Minister for Child Protection will endorse the final policy.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC note the WALGA update on the development of the Child Safe Policy for Local Government.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie
Seconded: Mr Brian Joiner, Shire of Menzies

Carried

7.7 National Reconciliation Week Local Government Activation Program

WALGA Recommendation

That the update on the National Reconciliation Week Local Government Activation Program be noted.

IN BRIEF:

- National Reconciliation Week (NRW), 27 May - 3 June, is an important annual event central to the *Relationships* pillar of [WALGA's Reconciliation Action Plan](#) (RAP).
- WALGA partnered with Reconciliation WA to support a NRW activation program for all Local Governments.
- 33 Local Governments participated in NRW, delivering 60 events with approximately 1814 attendees.

WALGA ADVOCACY POSITION:

3.1.2 Reconciliation

The Association supports the efforts of the Local Government sector to recognise and respect Aboriginal cultural practices and places of meaning, through the development of Reconciliation Action Plans.

(September 2012 – 118.5/2012)

BACKGROUND:

National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is a time for all Australians to learn about shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia. NRW is held from 27 May to 3 June. These dates commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey, the successful 1967 Referendum and the High Court Mabo decision respectively.

WALGA is actively involved in Reconciliation, working with Local Government, and advocating for improved Aboriginal relationships. NRW is an important event and is vital to the *Relationships* pillar of [WALGA's Reconciliation Action Plan](#) (RAP).

COMMENT:

This year's NRW theme, '[Be Brave. Make Change.](#)' sought to challenge individuals, families, communities, organisations and government to tackle the unfinished business of reconciliation. In the spirit of this theme, WALGA partnered with Reconciliation WA to provide an opportunity for Local Governments to get involved in the NRW program. A statewide NRW Virtual Breakfast was hosted at Boola Bardip (WA Museum) on Friday, 27 May.

The breakfast was broadcast live with the aim of engaging communities across the State. Participants, including Local Governments were encouraged to participate in the virtual breakfast via video whilst hosting their own NRW Breakfast. The NRW Virtual Breakfast included Welcome to Country from Elders around the State, cultural performances, a fly through collections in Boola Bardip, and an address from Hon. Dr Tony Buti, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. To complement the virtual breakfast, every Local Government received a free 'NRW Activation Box' to assist them to design and activate COVID-safe breakfast events to suit their local community and circumstances.

As a result of the partnership there was a notable increase in the number of Local Governments who engaged in NRW. A total of 33 Local Governments participated in NRW, delivering 60 events with approximately 1814 attendees.

All Elected Members, Local Government CEOs and officers are invited to attend WALGA's sixth annual [Aboriginal Engagement and Reconciliation Forum](#) to be held on 5 October 2022.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC note the WALGA update on the National Reconciliation Week Local Government Activation Program.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr Andrew Brien, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder
Seconded: Mr Jim Epis, Shire of Leonora

Carried

7.8 WA Strategic Trails Blueprint 2022-2027 – Draft for Comment

WALGA Recommendation

That the update on the WA Strategic Trails Blueprint 2022-2027 – Draft for Comment be noted.

IN BRIEF:

- The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) in partnership with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) have drafted the *Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint 2022-2027* which is now open for comment.
- Local Governments have been invited to provide comments directly to DLGSC on the draft plan until 29 July 2022.

BACKGROUND:

DLGSC, in partnership with DBCA, have drafted the next five-year trails strategy for Western Australia. WALGA, as a member of the Project Reference Group, has supported the development of the Blueprint, which is currently available as a draft for comment.

The Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint 2022-2027 (the Blueprint) is an overarching guide for consistent and coordinated planning, development and management of quality trails and trail experiences across Western Australia. It provides a vision, guiding principles, strategic directions and actions for consideration across the State by government, trail managers, landholders, trail support groups, tourism operators and the community.

The new Blueprint is intended to build on the [Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint 2017-2021](#), with a strategic refocus for the trails industry towards deepening trail users connection to country, community and culture, whilst ensuring ongoing economic, environmental and social sustainability of trails developments. Local Governments have a role to play in this integrated framework, which aims to streamline trail planning, development, management and funding across the whole State.

COMMENT:

Local Governments across WA manage and maintain trails by providing the infrastructure necessary for quality recreation and visitor experiences. Trails provide Local Governments with opportunities to enhance community health and wellbeing, environmental conservation and economic value through tourism opportunities.

DLGSC and DBCA recognise the important role of Local Governments in trail development and management across the State, and have extended the consultation period on the Blueprint to support Local Government feedback.

WALGA is hosting a webinar on 23 June for Local Governments where DLGSC, DBCA and Common Ground will present on the Draft Blueprint.

Local Governments are encouraged to provide feedback on the [Draft Blueprint](#) directly to [DLGSC](#) by Friday, 29 July 2022.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC note the WALGA update on the WA Strategic Trails Blueprint 2022-2027 – Draft for Comment.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie
Seconded: Cr Ian Mickel, Shire of Esperance

Carried

7.9 **Issues Paper: Local Government Approaches to Tree Retention**

WALGA Recommendation

That the WALGA Issues Paper: Local Government Approaches to Tree Retention (May 2022) be noted.

IN BRIEF:

- The Issues Paper: Local Government Approaches to Tree Retention (Issues Paper) seeks to identify issues that Local Governments are experiencing in using existing mechanisms to retain trees on public and private land, further mechanisms which may be used by Local Governments, and possible options for resolving these issues.
- The Issues Paper has been prepared by WALGA's Planning and Environment teams in close consultation with the Tree Retention Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) of the WALGA Urban Forest Working Group, comprising regional and metropolitan Local Government officers and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH).
- The legal questions arising from the Issues Paper will be used to prepare a Request for Quote for advice from suitably experienced legal firms on the WALGA preferred supplier panel. It is proposed that this work will be funded collaboratively by Local Governments that wish to receive this advice.
- The legal advice will inform further priorities and actions, for example development of policy guidance for the sector and further advocacy to the State Government on tree retention in the State planning framework.

ATTACHMENTS:

- [Issues Paper: Local Government Approaches to Tree Retention \(May 2022\)](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

4.6 Urban Forestry

Local Government supports advocacy and work to further prevent the loss of urban tree canopy, including the Association's collaboration with the State Government and consultation with Local Government, to develop policies to support Local Government's efforts to maintain and grow tree canopy cover.

(March 2017 – 13.1/2017)

The content and trajectory for the Issues Paper aligns with the existing advocacy position. Following the findings of the legal review and further analysis of the issues identified, [WALGA's Advocacy Position](#) will be reviewed.

BACKGROUND:

Canopy cover across urban areas in Western Australia continues to decline, predominantly through tree loss on private land. At the same time the extent of hard surface is increasing and is higher than the national average. These trends have significant environmental, economic and social impacts, including the following:

- Increased urban heat island effect as paved surfaces absorb more heat, leading to increased household energy costs, increased heat-related illnesses and harsher, less walkable urban environments;
- Reduced air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emission absorption; and
- Reduced biodiversity and connection to nature in our suburbs.

WALGA has been actively advocating and supporting the sector on the issue of urban forest and tree retention, including proposing a State Urban Greening Program as part of the WALGA State Budget Submission, the development of the [Better Urban Forest Guide](#) with DPLH in 2019 and delivering the 2020 Urban Forest Conference.

WALGA has also facilitated the Local Government Urban Forest Working Group (UFWG) since 2019.

In early 2021, the UFWG undertook strategic planning to identify focus areas to dedicate the skills and expertise within the Group towards strategic projects. Tree retention was identified as a key priority and an expert subcommittee was formed to progress work in this area.

The Issues Paper has been prepared by the WALGA Planning and Environment teams in close consultation with the UFWG Subcommittee. The purpose of the Issues Paper is to identify the key challenges faced by Local Governments using existing measures for tree retention, as well as additional mechanisms for tree retention.

The Issues Paper poses a number of hypothetical scenarios to ground common situations Local Governments may experience where they seek to retain trees, including:

- Tree valuation methods used by Local Governments which seek financial compensation for the removal of canopy trees;
- Instances where proposed vehicle crossovers are in conflict with trees on road reserves (two scenarios);
- Instances where trees are removed from private land in the absence of other development occurring;
- Tree Preservation Orders made over private land to prevent tree removal; and.
- Instances where trees are retained in accordance with the R-Codes Volume 1.

The Issues Paper also includes a general discussion on the scope for additional policy and legislative measures through which trees may be retained:

- The ability of Local Governments to make planning scheme provisions to retain trees on private land;
- The scope for the planning system to consider the amenity impacts of trees and their removal;
- The balance between delivering a public good and protecting private property rights;
- What constitutes a 'significant' tree and what might be achieved by applying a sector-wide definition;
- The impact of standard subdivision processes on established trees; and
- The capacity for the planning framework to better create space for trees to grow and be planted.

WALGA is working with the Subcommittee and LGIS to identify the key legal questions arising from the Issues Paper and prepare a request for quote for suitably experienced legal firms on the WALGA preferred supplier panel. WALGA and the Subcommittee will together identify resource requirements to obtain legal advice and discuss opportunities for collaborative funding of the advice and any further research required.

It is anticipated the legal advice will assist WALGA and the Subcommittee to identify a clear way forward to ensure Local Government tree retention measures can withstand legal challenge and achieve their intended aims. This may include development of policy guidance for the sector as well as further advocacy to the State Government on tree retention in the State planning framework.

COMMENT:

The loss of mature trees across our State's urban areas is already resulting in suburbs that are hotter, less resilient and less liveable. Liveability and urban heat will be increasingly significant issues for Local Governments as heat waves become more common and summer temperatures increase in the coming years.

This Issues Paper represents an important step taken by WALGA and its UFWG, through the Subcommittee, to consider how Local Governments can best allocate resources and interventions to facilitate tree retention and meet their urban forest objectives. The Issues Paper has been prepared with input and consultation from experienced practitioners and covers in detail common issues experienced by Local Governments in their tree retention work.

To address the potential liabilities and other issues identified in the Issues Paper, it is intended that further advice will be sought from legal and other experts, potentially under a collaborative funding arrangement. This research and advice will be used to prepare guidance and advocacy strategies to assist Local Governments in meeting their responsibility to their communities to ensure liveable and resilient neighbourhoods into the future.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC note the WALGA Issues Paper: Local Government Approaches to Tree Retention (May 2022).

RESOLUTION: **Moved: *Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie***
 Seconded: *Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton*

Carried

7.10 Report Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC)

WALGA Recommendation

That the resolutions of the Municipal Waste Advisory Council from its 27 April 2022 meeting be noted.

IN BRIEF:

This item summaries the outcomes of the Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) meeting held on 27 April 2022.

BACKGROUND:

- MWAC is seeking that State Council notes the resolutions from its 27 April 2022 meeting, consistent with the delegated authority granted to MWAC to deal with waste management issues.
- Copies of Agendas and Minutes are available from WALGA staff, on request.

COMMENT:

The key issues considered at the meeting held on 27 April 2022 included:

Product Stewardship for Photovoltaics

Photovoltaic (PV) systems were placed on the Federal Environment Minister's Product Stewardship Priority List in 2016. An industry agreed nationwide scheme design must be finalised by June 2022, operational by June 2023 and include an approach to deal with legacy PVs.

Progress has been limited and an industry-led, national product stewardship scheme has not been developed. The Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence has been tasked with facilitating the design of a Scheme.

The Issues Paper outlines some of the key considerations in relation to end of life PV management and, using WALGA's [Principles for Product Stewardship](#), identifies the key considerations for designing an effective Product Stewardship Scheme for PVs.

MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL MOTION

That the Municipal Waste Advisory Council endorse the Issues Paper: Photovoltaic Product Stewardship.

Moved: Cr Price
Seconded: Cr Wheatland

CARRIED

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC note the resolutions of the Municipal Waste Advisory Council from its 27 April 2022 meeting.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie
Seconded: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton

Carried

7.11 WALGA Best Practice Governance Review Update

WALGA Recommendation

That the update on the WALGA Best Practice Governance Review Project be noted.

BACKGROUND:

WALGA has embarked on a significant project to review WALGA's governance model to ensure the organisation is governed by a contemporary, sound, and agile governance model that:

- Facilitates meaningful engagement with Local Government members,
- Enhances WALGA's legitimacy among members and stakeholders, and
- Enables sound and focused decision making to guide advocacy, policy, and service delivery.

WALGA's [Corporate Strategy 2020-25](#) identifies "contemporary governance and engagement models" as a key strategic priority leading to State Council's commissioning of the Best Practice Governance Review project.

A further goal of the project is to fundamentally review, and subsequently amend, WALGA's governance documentation – Constitution, Corporate Governance Charter, State Council Code of Conduct, and Standing Orders – to ensure consistency and alignment.

To oversee the project, State Council appointed a Steering Committee with the following membership:

President Cr Karen Chappel JP	WALGA President (Chair)
Cr Paul Kelly	WALGA Deputy President
President Cr Phil Blight	Country State Councillor
Mayor Carol Adams OAM	Metropolitan State Councillor
President Cr David Menzel	Country Elected Member
Mayor Albert Jacob	Metropolitan Elected Member
Andrew Sharpe	Country Chief Executive Officer
David MacLennan	Metropolitan Chief Executive Officer
Nick Sloan	WALGA Chief Executive Officer

Senior WALGA staff are providing executive support and PwC has been appointed to facilitate meetings of the Steering Committee and to produce an Options Paper and a Final Report.

The Steering Committee has met twice. At the first meeting, held on 5 May 2022, the Committee:

- Adopted Terms of Reference
- Reviewed the Project Plan
- Considered existing governance documentation
- Discussed the project methodology, and
- Agreed five comparator organisations whose governance models would be reviewed:
 - i. Australian Hotels Association (AHA)
 - ii. Australian Medical Association (AMA)
 - iii. Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA (CCIWA)
 - iv. Chamber of Minerals and Energy (CME), and
 - v. Pharmacy Guild of WA

The comparator organisations were selected for their similarity to WALGA as membership organisations (with organisations as members) and their perceived effectiveness as advocacy peak bodies.

At the Steering Committee's second meeting, held on 8 June 2022, the Committee reviewed the governance models of comparator organisations presented by PwC and identified initial performance assessment criteria that will guide the evaluation of alternative governance model options.

The Steering Committee will be meeting again in late June to consider an Options Paper which will present alternative governance model options. The Options paper will be presented to State Council at the 6 July Strategic Forum. Member feedback will then be sought on the Options Paper during July and August.

Following member feedback, the Steering Committee will direct the development of an agenda item outlining high level principles and non-negotiables of a future governance model for the 2022 Annual General Meeting. This agenda item and debate will gauge members' views on the direction of the project.

The final report due to be completed by mid-October 2022 will be the subject of further consultation with members, including through a full round of Zone meetings in November in the lead-up to the December State Council meeting.

Substantive structural changes to WALGA's governance model will require amendments to the Constitution, which must be approved by a special (75 percent) majority at both a meeting of State Council and an Annual General Meeting. As such, any proposed changes will need to have strong support of members for Constitutional change to be ratified. The aim of the project is to put forward constitutional amendments to members at the 2023 Annual General Meeting.

COMMENT:

The Best Practice Governance Review Project represents a significant opportunity to improve WALGA's governance model to improve decision making effectiveness while ensuring meaningful member representation and participation.

Past reviews since the formation of WALGA as the single Local Government sector peak body over 20 years ago have led to significant process and other improvements while the structure and composition of State Council has remained broadly unchanged. WALGA receives mixed feedback on its governance model through member surveys and other mechanisms suggesting there is room for improvement.

Any future governance model will need to balance member representation and participation in decision making processes with efficiency and strategic focus. The forthcoming Options Paper will present potential options that aim to balance competing objectives identified by the Steering Committee.

Member engagement and consultation will be crucial to the success of the project and very high levels of member support will be required for constitutional amendments to be ratified, as outlined above. Consequently, members should anticipate opportunities to contribute to the project and provide insight in relation to options put forward over coming months.

GVROC COMMENTS:

The GVROC would like more information regarding the consultation plan proposed for the next phase of the project. What will be the opportunity for LGAs to provide feedback into the process or is just through the Steering Committee and State Council?

It was also suggested that the Steering Committee should travel out to each Zone to meet and discuss with the Zones (GVROC) on the process.

Based on the above comments/questions the Timeframes for the project also seem short to make well informed decisions, with a final report due in October, presented at Zone meeting in November and then to State Council in December. GVROC suggest that to ensure good consultation and feedback into the process it may be better to push this timeframe out into 2023.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC note the update on the WALGA Best Practice Governance Review Project and request WALGA respond to the above comments and questions.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Ian Mickel, Shire of Esperance

Seconded: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie

Carried

8. Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Policy Team Reports

The following provides an outline of the key activities of the Policy Teams since the last State Council meeting.

Policy Teams

8.1 Environment and Waste Policy Team Report

The Environment and Waste Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

- Climate change
- Native vegetation and biodiversity
- Biosecurity
- Water resources
- Sustainability
- Waste management

This report provides an update on matters considered by the Environment and Waste Policy Team at its meeting held on 3 May 2022 as outlined in **Attachment 3**.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC notes the matters considered by the Environment and Waste Policy Team.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton**
 Seconded: Mayor John Bowler, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder

Carried

8.2 Governance and Organisational Services Policy Team Report

The Governance and Organisational Services Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

- Employee relations
- Governance
- Strategy and Association Governance
- Training
- Regional Capacity Building / Local Government Reform

This report provides an update on matters considered, since the last State Council meeting, by the Governance and Organisational Services (GOS) Policy Team at its meeting held on 3 May 2022 and provides recommendations for State Council consideration on a number of reviewed WALGA Advocacy Positions as outlined in **Attachment 3**.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC notes and supports the Governance and Organisational Services Policy Team's recommendation to State Council as follows:

That State Council:

1. retains Advocacy Positions:
 - a. 2.5.56 Rating Exemptions – Charitable Purposes
 - b. 2.9.1 Cyber Bullying Protections
2. amends Advocacy Positions:
 - a. 2.2.2 Local Government Audit Structure, by inserting items 5 to 8 as follows:
 5. *Local Government Annual Financial Audits should be completed by the 31 October each year, so that Local Governments can reasonably comply with legislative provisions for Annual Reports and Elector Meetings.*

6. **Completion of Local Government Annual Financial Audits should not be delayed to enable completion of financial audits of a third party entity to which the Local Government is a participant or member, on the basis that each Local Government and Regional Local Government is a separate and independent entity and Australian Accounting standards equity accounting provisions already apply.**
7. **Audit issues should be raised with a Local Government no more than four weeks from submission of the Annual Financial Statements to the Office of the Auditor General.**
8. **Requests the OAG to review the accounting treatment for road assets transferred from Local Government to Main Roads WA, as the approach applied in 2020/21 resulted in significant distortion of operating results for Local Government in the year in which the transfer occurs.**

b. **2.5.69 Surveillance Devices Act 1998 Amendment, as follows:**

WALGA advocates for amendment of Regulation 4 of the Surveillance Devices Regulations 1999 (WA) so that it includes “Local Government ‘Authorised Persons’ employees as defined in the Local Government Act 1995 section 5.36(1)(b) who perform law enforcement functions on behalf of the Local Government” as a class of Law Enforcement Officers for the purposes of the Surveillance Devices Act 1998 (WA).

c. **2.7 Elected Member Training, as follows:**

- i. **Delete items 3 and 4 as these items have been achieved, AND**
- ii. **Amend item 2:**

2. **Requests the State Government through the Minister for Local Government to provide funding assistance to compensate Local Governments for Elected Members ~~to receive participation in universal~~ training;**

3. **adopts WALGA Advocacy Position – Legislative Council Member Allowances – Regional Representation, as follows:**

Position Statement	WALGA advocates to State Government through the Minister for Electoral Affairs and the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal to provide additional allowances to Members of the Legislative Council (MLC), on the proviso that they have a staffed office in country areas, to facilitate a regional presence of MLCs.
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RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton

Seconded: Mayor John Bowler, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder

Carried

8.3 Infrastructure Policy Team Report

The Infrastructure Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

- Roads and paths
- Road safety
- Transport
- Freight
- Utilities (including telecommunications and underground power)

This Report provides an update on matters considered, since the last State Council meeting, by the Infrastructure Policy Team at its meeting held on 4 May 2022 as outlined in **Attachment 3**.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC notes the matters considered by the Infrastructure Policy Team.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton

Seconded: Mayor John Bowler, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder

Carried

8.4 **People and Place Policy Team Report**

The People and Place Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

- Community
- Emergency Management
- Planning and Building

This Report provides an update on matters considered, since the last State Council meeting, by the People and Place Policy Team at its meetings held on 6 April and 18 May 2022 as outlined in **Attachment 3**.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC notes and supports the People and Place Policy Team's recommendation to State Council as follows:

That State Council:

1. note the matters considered by the People and Place Policy Team at its meetings on 6 April and 18 May 2022;
2. rescind its decision (resolution no. 326.2/2022) of 2 March 2022 where it relates to Advocacy Position 6.9; and
3. reinstate the Advocacy Position subject to the changes endorsed by the People and Place Policy team on 22 February, that reads:

6.9 Sex Industry Regulation

Position Statement

The Local Government sector supports in principle, the recognition and licensing of sex work in WA as it allows normal regulatory controls to be put in place, on condition that brothels should be excluded from predominantly residential areas.

Background

The Association has been involved in discussions / proposals to decriminalise sex work since 1999. State Council has determined the position through consultation with all member Councils (on several occasions), and consideration of feedback and representative position papers, workshops, discussions with other government agencies, support groups and members of the sex industry. The Association will only comment on regulatory, operational, amenity and cost implications that arise for Local Government from any sex work legislation – not moral issues.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton

Seconded: Mayor John Bowler, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder

Carried

9. Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Organisational Key Activity Reports

- 9.1 Report on Key Activities, Commercial and Communications (01-006-03-0017)
- 9.2 Report on Key Activities, Governance and Organisational Services (01-006-03-0007 TB)
- 9.3 Report on Key Activities, Infrastructure (05-001-02-0003 ID)
- 9.4 Report on Key Activities, Strategy, Policy and Planning (01-006-03-0017 NM)

GVROC COMMENT:

GVROC note the Organisation Key Activity Reports as provided.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: *Mr Andrew Brien, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder*
Seconded: *Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie*

Carried

10. Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Policy Forums and Other Reports

The following provides an outline of the key activities of the Association's Policy Forums that have met since the last State Council meeting.

10.1 Mining Communities Policy Forum

WALGA Recommendation

That the report on the key activities of the Mining Communities Policy Forum to the July 2022 State Council meeting be noted.

The State Government recently announced that a preliminary engineering survey contract has been awarded to local Aboriginal company Gee Gie to assess abandon mine features near Cue, Marble Bar and Yalgoo. Gee Gie will work with the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety to identify, document and prioritise remediation work of abandoned mine features. Details can be found [here](#)

WALGA is progressing meetings with RDA Midwest Gascoyne and DMIRS.

GVROC COMMENTS:

Is WALGA through the Mining Communities Policy Forum looking at making a response or statement around the recent WA Parliamentary report "Enough is Enough" into sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry tabled in State Parliament on 23 June 2022?

10.2 President's Report

WALGA Recommendation

That the President's Report for July 2022 be received. (refer to Attachment 4)

GVROC COMMENTS:

The GVROC note the Presidents report comments around the Rates Campaign regarding negative sentiment about potential rate increases in 2022. The GVROC would like any campaign to also include information around rent rate increases set by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

(DMIRS), for which the LGAs have to pass on to the mining companies through their rates notices. There is a need to advise that these increases are not set by the LGAs but by the State Government through DMIRS and the LGAs have no choice but to pass the increases on to the mining sector organisation rate payers.

10.3 CEO's Report

WALGA Recommendation

That the CEO's Report for July 2022 be received.

10.4 Ex Officio Reports

- The Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor Basil Zempilas to provide the City of Perth report to the meeting.
- LG Professionals President, Annie Riordan, to provide the LG Professionals report to the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC notes the report on the key activities of the Mining Communities Policy Forum, and the President's and CEO's Reports for July 2022 and the Ex Officio reports as received.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: *Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton*

Seconded: *Cr Ian Mickel, Shire of Esperance*

Carried

<h2>11. Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – State Council Status Report</h2>

11.1 Complete Status Report on State Council Resolutions - To the July 2022 State Council Meeting

GVROC COMMENT:

Additional to the Complete Status Report on State Council Resolutions, **Attachment 5** provides the relevant Goldfields Esperance Country Zone Status Report.

RECOMMENDATION:

GVROC notes the Complete State Council Status Report to the July 2022 State Council meeting and the Goldfields Esperance Country Zone Status Report.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: *Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie*

Seconded: *Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton*

Carried

12. LATE ITEMS as notified, introduced by decision of the Meeting

Motion to accept late item:

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Ian Mickel, Shire of Esperance**
 Seconded: Mr Brian Joiner, Shire of Menzies

12.1 Proposed Advocacy Position for Management of Bushfire Brigades Discussion Paper

This additional item, which relates to **Agenda Item 7.2** on this Agenda, has been provided by WALGA to assist and generate further conversation within the Zones.

BACKGROUND:

WALGA is seeking the views of the sector on a new Advocacy Position on the management of Bushfire Brigades, as per the Discussion Paper, [Arrangements for Management of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades: Proposed Advocacy Position](#).

Western Australian Local Governments have extensive roles and responsibilities prescribed in the State Emergency Management Framework (State Framework) across the emergency management activities of prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. Relevantly, pursuant to the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, Local Governments have responsibility for bushfire and the management of volunteer Bush Fire Brigades (BFBs).

The Paper proposes a new Advocacy Position on the management of BFBs to guide the Association's emergency management advocacy on behalf of Local Government, and in particular its engagement with the State Government on the development of the Consolidated Emergency Services Act which is expected to be released for stakeholder consultation in early 2023.

Four options are identified for the future management of BFBs:

1. Status quo – continue with the current arrangements for management of BFBs whereby the majority are managed by Local Government and transfer arrangements are negotiated on an ad hoc basis between DFES and Local Governments (or their BFBs).
■
2. Improvements – continue with the current arrangements for Local Government management of BFBs with additional support provided by the State Government with respect to increased funding and better access to training resources and other support.
■
3. Hybrid Model – Local Government continues to manage BFBs where they have the capacity, capability and resources to do so; however where they do not have the capacity, capability and resources, responsibility for management of BFBs is transferred to DFES.
■
4. Transfer – Responsibility for management of all BFBs is transferred to the State Government, consistent with the arrangements in other States and Territories.

COMMENT

Based on the feedback received from Local Governments in the WALGA Emergency Management Survey and the other considerations outlined in the paper, it is considered appropriate for the Association to support a hybrid model for the management of BFBs.

A hybrid model would enable the continued management of BFBs by those Local Governments with capacity, capability and resources to do so, while providing a framework for the transfer of the management of BFBs to the State Government where a Local Government does not.

Whatever the arrangements for future management of BFBs, it is apparent that Local Governments with responsibility for management of BFBs require additional support and resourcing which should be provided by the State Government, including:

- Development of a suite of guidelines and resources to assist Local Governments in their management of BFBs, particularly with respect to the discharge of obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2021*;
- Expansion of the Community Emergency Services Manager Program (CESM) so that every Local Government with responsibility for managing BFBs has access to the Program if they wish to participate;
- Universal access to DFES training for BFBs; and
- Development of mandatory and minimum training requirements including recognition of competency for volunteers.

Local Governments are encouraged to provide a written response to this Paper or to complete the survey. Formal Council resolutions will assist the Association understand the sentiment of the sector on this important issue.

Questions are provided at the end of the Paper to guide feedback.

Feedback should be provided in response to the questions via email to em@walga.asn.au by 5pm Friday 8 July 2022.

GVROC COMMENTS:

Shire of Dundas CEOs has been in touch with WALGA's Susie Moir, who advises that many LGAs across WA have requested an extension on their formal reply to the Advocacy Position. The Shire of Dundas were granted an extension till 26 July 2022 to provide feedback, allowing their team to formulate the State Council Agenda Items.

This submission will be delayed in their State Council Agenda till September 2022 because of these requests. It is very important that the policy position for this matter is advocated correctly, otherwise it could mean increased financial pressures and WHS Risks transferred by the State Government to the LGAs.

GVROC COMMENTS:

In progressing any model for management of Bushfire Brigades there needs to be assurances that there are fair and equitable resources provided to all Bushfires Brigades whether they are continued to be retained by LGAs or if they are transferred over to DFES. There are concerns that DFES operated Bushfire Brigades will be focussed on and well resourced, while LGA retained ones are left behind to fend for themselves, effectively then forcing them to be transferred to DFES with DFES then retaining all Bushfire Brigades. This is not the best solution as in some cases the Bushfire Brigades can be more effectively managed and operated through the LGA.

Another concern that has been raised that needs to be considered is the continuing decrease in volunteers and how this can be addressed in any future management model.

RECOMMENDATION:

That GVROC:

1. **notes the discussion paper and WALGA's support for the hybrid model option for the management of BFBs.**
2. **Requests all GVROC Local Government members to provide a written response to this Paper or to complete the survey as requested.**
3. **Note that the Shire of Dundas was granted an extension to 26 July 2022 for responses and recommends all LGAs request extension to ensure responses meet the requirements for LGAs.**
4. **Requests WALGA to note and consider the GVROC comments/concerns listed above in its proposed advocacy position and discussion paper.**

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr Cary Green, Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku

Seconded: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie

Carried

Motion to accept late item:

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton**
 Seconded: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie

12.2 Cashless Debit Card (CDC) – Federal Government Election Result

BACKGROUND:

This is an update on the Agenda Item that was presented at the GVROC Meeting on 27 May 2022 and the recent visit to Canberra by Cr Patrick Hill, President Shire of Laverton and his meeting with Kate Coleman, Adviser to the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, Minister for Social Services regarding the discontinuation of the CDC trial in the Goldfields as part of the Labor election commitment.

At the GVROC meeting on 27 May 2022, The GVROC resolved the following:

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Opposes the Federal Government Proposal to cancel the CDC Trial in the WA Goldfields.
2. Request the GVROC Chair write to the new Prime Minister and Minister for Social Services requesting that before any consideration is given to scrapping the CDC, that they visit the communities that currently operate under the scheme to hear firsthand what it means and the outcomes it delivers in these communities.
3. Advises the Federal Government that should they proceed with the decision they will need to work closely with the WA State Government to ensure sufficient resources (i.e. Police, Health, Medical, Emergency Services) are provided to address the anti-social behaviour that results from the decision.
4. Advises the Federal Government that should they proceed with the decision to end the CDC programme, that the Minister for Social Services provide all LGAs currently involved in the CDC programme an alternate long term action plan as well as a lengthy transition period for the withdrawal of the programme.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton**
 Seconded: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie

Carried

COMMENT

Cr Patrick Hill, President Shire of Laverton provided an update on his meeting with Kate Coleman, Adviser to the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, Minister for Social Services held on 21 June 2022 in Canberra.

Cr Patrick Hill advised the meeting went well and he was advised by Kate Coleman that the Minister and/or her staff will come and visit the Goldfields in the coming weeks to discuss the transition from the CDC and hear from people on the ground regarding its operations and outcomes before proceeding with any action. Cr Patrick Hill urged that while the GVROC accepts that the CDC would be discontinued in its current form, it is vitally important that an agreed transition plan is put in place with recipients and include the Local Government Authorities and others in the Communities which it operates.

Regarding the recommendation from the 27 May 2022, Chair Mal Cullen advised that a letter was being drafted to the Prime Minister and Minister and now would be reworded to incorporate the feedback from CR Patrick Hill's meeting and feedback in Canberra.

RECOMMENDATION:

That GVROC request in line with its resolution from 27 May 2022, that the Chair formally invite the Minister for Social Services to visit the region as part of the letter to be sent.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton**
 Seconded: Cr Tracey Rathbone, Shire of Coolgardie

Carried

13. FUTURE MEETINGS

With the continuing and evolving situation of the COVID-19 “Corona Virus” scheduling of future meetings as in person is a watching brief. This will be reviewed at each meeting by GVROC and decisions made on whether the meetings are held as in person meetings or conducted through Zoom video conferencing.

In noting the above, the following suggested dates in 2022 have been set for the remaining GVROC meetings.

- 29 July 2022 (Coolgardie Recreation Centre hosted by the Shire of Coolgardie)
- 2-5 October 2022 (TBC Perth to coincide with LGA Week and WALGA AGM)
- 18 November 2022 (Shire of Laverton)

The following are the WALGA State Council meeting dates in 2022 with suggested GVROC Zoom video conference meeting dates prior to these to inform the GVROC’s representatives attending the meetings with relevant input for State Council Agenda Items:

- 6 July 2022 WALGA State Council Meeting - GVROC meeting on **24 June 2022**
- 8-9 September 2022 WALGA State Council Meeting - GVROC meeting on **26 August 2022**
- 7 December 2022 WALGA State Council Meeting - GVROC meeting on **25 November 2022**

14. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 10:10am.